

amend the Controlled Substances Act with respect to the scheduling of fentanyl-related substances, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1236

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. OSSOFF) and the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 1236 intended to be proposed to S. 331, a bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act with respect to the scheduling of fentanyl-related substances, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. REED: (for himself and Ms. LUMMIS):

S. 964. A bill to amend title I of the National Housing Act to increase the loan limits and clarify that property improvement loans may be used for construction of accessory dwelling units; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, today I am introducing the Property Improvement and Manufactured Housing Loan Modernization Act with Senator Lummis. Our bipartisan bill would help more families purchase an affordable home and maintain our housing supply by strengthening the Federal Housing Administration, FHA, Title I Loan Program.

Like its better known title II sister program, FHA Title I expands access to housing and boosts affordability for families by insuring private market loans. However, title I is targeted towards two underserved portions of our housing market—manufactured homes and property improvement.

For decades, title I has enabled families to access stable, affordable housing, while also helping maintain our Nation's housing stock. Indeed, manufactured homes are the largest source of unsubsidized affordable housing in the country, and property improvement loans help prevent more single-family homes and apartments from falling into disrepair and out of our housing supply.

These loans should be an important tool in helping to close our nationwide housing shortage, which the Brookings Institution estimates at nearly 5 million homes. However, outdated loan limits and statutory restrictions have turned title I from an effective program into a missed opportunity.

From the mid-1980s through the early 1990s, lenders offered 15,000 to 25,000 title I manufactured home loans each year. But in 2021, only three loans were issued. Similarly, lenders have gone from making more than 70,000 title I property improvement loans annually in the 1990s to making fewer than 1,000 in 2022. That is a 99-percent drop in loan volume or in other words, as many as 99,000 fewer homes being bought,

preserved, and included in our housing stock each year.

The Property Improvement and Manufactured Housing Loan Modernization Act would refurbish title I and return it to our housing toolbox. It would expand loan limits and terms for all title I loans—making the program fit market demand and needs. Perhaps more importantly, the bill would finally allow FHA to index property improvement loans for inflation and expand the data it uses to set manufactured home loan limits, ensuring title I will remain a crucial tool as home costs rise in future years.

Finally, our legislation makes accessible dwelling units, ADUs, which are small housing units added to a single-family property, eligible for title I financing. This small addition to title I will make the program an even more powerful home-creation program than it was during its prior peak years and will particularly help families who want to provide a safe, comfortable place for aging parents or young adult children to live.

Collectively, these improvements would help more families own a home, remain in homes they have spent decades in, and find an affordable place to live. I urge my colleagues to cosponsor this bill and support its passage.

By Mr. REED: (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Ms. SMITH, and Ms. KLOBUCHAR):

S. 965. A bill to strengthen the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I am pleased to join Senator COLLINS and Senators VAN HOLLEN, CORTEZ MASTO, SMITH, and KLOBUCHAR in introducing legislation that would permanently reauthorize the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness, the Council or USICH.

The Council was established during the Reagan administration as part of the landmark McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 1987. Over the last three and a half decades, it has led and coordinated the Federal Government's response to homelessness. In 2009, the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing, HEARTH, Act, which I authored along with Senator COLLINS, expanded the Council's role, allowing it to work with public, nonprofit, and private stakeholders to develop a national strategic plan to end homelessness. Despite its minimal budget and small staff, the Council has helped guide Federal, State, and local stakeholders in deploying their resources in a smart, effective, and coordinated fashion. The results have been evident. In the decade after USICH published its first plan, overall homelessness declined 9 percent. Family and veteran homelessness declined significantly, as well, with the total numbers dropping nearly 30 percent and 50 percent respectively.

In fact, the Council has been able to help 85 communities and 3 States effectively end veteran homelessness.

Despite these successes, homelessness has persisted, and skyrocketing housing prices since 2020 have brought a new surge in homelessness. The Department of Housing and Urban Development's 2024 Annual Homelessness Assessment Report to Congress found that, "[o]n a single night in January 2024, 771,480 people were experiencing homelessness in the United States." This is a record number of Americans experiencing homelessness since the count began. The face of homelessness—which individuals lack a safe, stable home—is also changing. Families with children had the largest increase in homelessness from 2023 to 2024. Indeed, nearly 150,000 children were experiencing homelessness on a single night last year. This staggering increase in homelessness is happening across the country.

USICH helps us meet this challenge by guiding how its 19 Federal member Agencies deploy and leverage their resources with non-Federal partners to help communities effectively address homelessness. We know that smart, coordinated investments in programs that address homelessness and increase affordable housing pay additional dividends. The National Alliance to End Homelessness has found that taxpayers pay an average of \$35,578 per year on each chronically homeless individual, while "based on 22 different studies from across the country, providing permanent supportive housing to chronically homeless people creates net savings of \$4,800 per person per year, through reduced spending on jails, hospitals, shelters, and other emergency services." In short, helping people avoid homelessness not only helps them, it also saves taxpayers money. USICH's coordinating work helps make our investments to address homelessness more informed and more effective.

Indeed, the Council continues to prove that the government can work and save money in the process. I thank HousingWorks RI for its support, and I urge my colleagues to join us in permanently authorizing USICH.

By Mr. REED (for himself and Mrs. BRITT):

S. 970. A bill to establish a pilot program to improve the family self-sufficiency program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, today I am reintroducing the Helping More Families Save Act with Senator Britt. This bipartisan legislation would help more families in HUD-assisted housing build savings and improve their financial security by creating a pilot program for Family Self-Sufficiency, FSS, universal escrow accounts.

The FSS Program was established under the National Affordable Housing Act of 1990 to help low-income families boost savings and improve their professional, educational, and financial

standing. In 2018, I worked with then-Senator Roy Blunt to expand the program to cover more households. Today, millions of public housing residents, Housing Choice Voucher Program participants, and residents of project-based rental assistance, PBRA, housing are eligible for FSS.

FSS provides two key tools for its participants. First, households work with FSS coordinators to develop long-term financial, professional, or educational goals. FSS coordinators also help connect participants with resources, training, and employment opportunities. Second, the program encourages FSS families to save by providing them with an interest-bearing escrow account. Participants who increase their incomes deposit a portion of their additional earnings into their escrow account instead of paying higher rent, as is typically required under federally subsidized housing programs. Upon graduation from the Program, families can use their escrowed savings to pay for job-related expenses, move to private market housing, buy a home, or save for the future.

After more than 30 years, FSS has become a proven financial independence program. For example, in 2022, 34 percent of FSS graduates no longer needed Federal rental assistance within 1 year of leaving FSS, and nearly 10 percent of graduates were ultimately able to purchase their own home. On average, FSS participants with escrow savings graduated from the program with approximately \$10,000 in their accounts. This is no small sum, and it helps HUD-assisted families strengthen their financial stability and move towards greater economic independence.

Despite the program's success and broad eligibility, program participation was effectively capped at about 70,000 enrollees in 2022 simply due to a lack of Federal funding for the required FSS coordinators.

The Helping More Families Save Act would help more Americans access the program by creating a new universal escrow pilot. Under the bill, public housing agencies, PHAs, and PBRA property owners could offer 5,000 additional households escrow accounts identical to those under the current FSS Program without having to wait for an FSS coordinator to be funded by the Federal Government. PHA and PBRA property owners would not be required to offer coordinator services to these new participants, although we expect many will work to offer counseling and support on their own or with outside partners. Moreover, we expect that this pilot will show that those enrolled in the program will be successful and make financially sound decisions.

Our pilot program would help more low-income families improve their financial security, achieve economic independence, and possibly even purchase their own homes, all with minimal cost to the Federal Government.

This is a commonsense, bipartisan proposal that would help more Ameri-

cans pull themselves out of poverty. It is a win for families, the Federal budget, and our economy. I thank Senator Britt for coleading this legislation and Compass Working Capital and LISC for their support. I urge our colleagues to cosponsor the Helping More Families Save Act and support its passage.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 123—RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE CHARLES B. RANGEL GRADUATE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM, THE THOMAS R. PICKERING FOREIGN AFFAIRS GRADUATE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM, THE WILLIAM D. CLARKE, SR. DIPLOMATIC SECURITY FELLOWSHIP, AND THE DONALD M. PAYNE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT GRADUATE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM IN ADVANCING THE NATIONAL SECURITY AND THE DEVELOPMENT AND DIPLOMACY EFFORTS OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. BOOKER submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 123

Whereas the Department of State, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and other foreign affairs agencies require a workforce with diverse talents, skills, and experiences to effectively protect United States citizens abroad, expand commercial opportunities for United States businesses, and administer United States foreign policy;

Whereas Congress has required in statute and the Department of State and the USAID have committed to recruit, hire, and retain employees on the basis of merit that reflect the diverse backgrounds of the American people that they represent abroad;

Whereas, in 1990, Congress amended the State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1956 (22 U.S.C. 2651a et seq.) to authorize the Secretary of State to make grants to post-secondary educational institutions or students to increase knowledge of and interest in employment with the Foreign Service, with a special focus on minority students, broadening recruitment and retention efforts in order to ensure equal opportunity and draw on the strength of all United States citizens;

Whereas, pursuant to these authorities, the Department of State launched the Thomas R. Pickering Foreign Affairs Fellowship, the Charles B. Rangel International Affairs Program, and the William D. Clarke, Sr. Diplomatic Security Fellowship in 1992, 2002, and 2023, respectively;

Whereas these programs increase the inclusion of Pell-eligible and first-generation college graduates in the Foreign Service, with a majority of current fellows having been Pell grant recipients;

Whereas the Charles B. Rangel International Affairs Graduate Fellowship Program and the Thomas R. Pickering Foreign Affairs Fellowship Program—the Department of State's flagship initiatives to recruit top-tier talent—are merit-based, need-based, and highly competitive, with an annual acceptance rate of less than 5 percent;

Whereas all fellows pass the same rigorous selection, hiring, and security clearance

process as all other members of the Foreign Service;

Whereas research shows that developing a workforce representing all of the United States significantly contributes to better national security outcomes by providing a wider range of perspectives, experiences, and cultural understanding, enabling more effective threat identification, innovative solutions, and stronger diplomatic engagement across the globe;

Whereas international affairs fellowships that promote the employment of candidates who belong to historically excluded groups and who have financial needs, including the Charles B. Rangel International Affairs Graduate Fellowship Program, the Thomas R. Pickering Foreign Affairs Fellowship Program, the William D. Clarke, Sr. Diplomatic Security Fellowship, and the Donald M. Payne International Development Fellowship Program, represent smart investments vital for building a strong, merit-based, capable, and diverse national security workforce;

Whereas Congress, on a bipartisan basis, has authorized each of these fellowship programs, recognizing the importance of these fellowship programs in expanding merit- and need-based recruitment from a wide geographically and economically diverse talent pool, including from all 50 States and more than 500 institutions of higher education;

Whereas Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-serving institutions, other minority-serving institutions and other institutions of higher education, including community colleges and trade schools, serve populations historically excluded from the Department of State and the USAID and prepare the next generation of international affairs professionals with the core skills necessary to meet the United States global diplomatic and development imperatives; and

Whereas the Secretary of State and the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development are required by law to consult with Congress before taking steps to modify these programs: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the importance of efforts to recruit, hire, and retain for United States foreign affairs agencies employees from the broadest talent pool, in order for the United States to be globally competitive and ensure that the diplomatic and development agencies of the United States remain the best in the world;

(2) reaffirms that the Charles B. Rangel Graduate Fellowship Program, the Thomas R. Pickering Foreign Affairs Graduate Fellowship Program, the William D. Clarke, Sr. Diplomatic Security Fellowship, and the Donald M. Payne International Development Graduate Fellowship Program are statutorily mandated programs enacted into law on a bipartisan basis to address recognized issues that have plagued the Department of State and the United States Agency for International Development for decades of exclusion of women, racial and ethnic minority groups, and economically disadvantaged and rural populations;

(3) underscores the importance to United States national security and foreign policy of international affairs fellowships and similar career entry programs; and

(4) recognizes the substantial investment by United States taxpayers in ensuring the Department of State and the United States Agency for International Development can recruit top talent from across the country, provide them with critical training, and strengthen the development and diplomatic capabilities of the United States—efforts